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OSS CZECH MISSION
APO 655

COUNTRY : Czechoslovakia
SUBJECT : Polish Brigade in Western
Czechoslovakia Report #3.
SOURCE : Devon 5
EVAL : B-2
REPORT NO : LC-134
DATE OF INFO : 26 July 45
PLACE OF ORIG: Praha
ETOUSA

1. In June the Polish Brigade consisting of about 1600 men and officers moved into a new area approximately 15 to 25 kilometers from the Czech-German border. At present the Brigade is billeted in the following villages of the former Sudeten area: Bernartice (Brig Hq), Dehetne, Valchne, Vitovice, Strachovice, Borek, Sichov, Vidlice, Dubec, Pavlovice, all in the administrative District of Tachov and policed by the Czech Gendarmerie station at Primda.

2. Food Supply: Although the Brigade is regularly supplied by American Army QM depot, periodic requisitions of food and forage from local resources are carried out ruthlessly by armed Polish soldiers, regardless of Czech protests. The following items were requisitioned by the Poles from local people from June 24th to July 4th 1945:

Beef Cattle:	3 head	Butter:	85 kilos		
Calves	: 5 head	Cream :	90 liters	Bread :	76 kilos
Pigs	: 3	Milk :	1360 liters	Flour :	10 kilos
Geese	: 5	Eggs :	2740	Potatoes:	550 kilos

Illegally collected for the POLISH RED CROSS: Butter: 21 kilos; 600 eggs; 60 kilos of cherries and many other food items in smaller quantities.

Where requisitioning of food supplies doesn't conform with Polish QM demands all food collected for distribution to civilians is simply confiscated, as happened in Dubec village. The above mentioned list of supplies obtained from local sources does not include items acquired by theft or looting of german farms by members of the brigade.

3. Forage: On 29 May 1945 Polish Brigade Hq was ordered by the Vth Corps Hq to turn over all their horses to the local Czech authorities. This order was not carried out in full, and when the Poles moved out of the VSEKARY area some 60 horses were taken along. Forage consisting of approximately 2 1/2 tons of hay, 1 ton of straw, about 250 kilos of oats has already been requisitioned for horses which the Poles are not supposed to have. Supplementary "free" grazing is again practiced as it was done before in the Vsekary area. QM officers are visiting outlying villages to requisition new supplies of hay, straw and oats without the permission of

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~~of~~ local authorities.

4. The Brigade retained all its arms which it uses for training and guard duty purposes. Large supplies of newly acquired weapons are stored in easily accessible and lightly guarded dumps, usually located in farmhouses.

5. Sentries and guards are again posted in excessive numbers throughout the whole area especially at all approaches to villages, challenging civilians and Czech officials alike.

6. An "unofficial" curfew has again been imposed on the local population.

7. Polish Brigade personnel ignore Czech authorities and act as an independent occupation force "attached" to the American Army. This unwarranted attitude of the Poles causes grave concern among Czech officials who do not know how to explain this unusual phenomenon of American occupation policies. Czechs believe that if the Poles had behaved according to the example set by American troops in this zone, there would have been no complaint against them until their problem was solved. American Army uniforms worn by Polish soldiers and service women cause bitterness and resentment among Czech soldiers who are forced to wear, for lack of decent uniforms, either civilian suits with tricolor arm bands or worn out Wehrmacht summer uniforms.

8. According to some Poles the Sudeten area is not part of Czechoslovakia but Germany and therefore they have the right of victors.

9. Constant exchange of personnel within the Polish Brigade, especially new arrivals in British battle-dress leads to a suspicion that the Brigade is being used as an assembly and clearing center for many suspicious individuals, possibly former Polish collaborators and informers, who by joining the Brigade try to avoid investigation by Allied and Czech authorities.

10. Polish civilians, both male and female, are still accepted by the Brigade which provides them with shelter and food. These civilians however are not reported to Czech authorities nor Displaced Persons camps despite strict orders to do so. Younger men and women are gradually put in uniforms in which all traces of their former origin and whereabouts disappear.

11. Open defiance of Soviet Government is the renewed credo of the Polish Brigade. "We will return only to a Russian-free Poland with our glorious colors flying" is the essence of morale boosting activities. Persistent rumors constantly repeated to local people implying that there will be a new war between the Western Allies and Russia in which the Poles will fight against Russia are disturbing the peace among local inhabitants,

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who, have hardly had a chance yet to recover from the horrible blows of this war. The Anti-Russian activities of the Poles are the source of constant worry for Czech officials who fear reprisals in case the Russian command should be informed.

12. Unauthorized Activities: by members of the Brigade continue without any noticeable intervention by its commanding personnel. Local Czech Gendarmerie stations receive daily reports of theft and other illegal acts committed by armed Polish soldiers in the billeting and neighboring areas. Since the Brigade's arrival at the new location 19 radio receivers, 4 motorcycles and many articles of lesser value have been reported stolen by Polish soldiers.

Use of counterfeit ration coupons and books by Poles has been reported to local ration boards.

The most important and possibly the most serious transgression, from both the Czech and the international point of view, occurred at the Orlov estate on the night of July 1st, when armed Polish soldiers raped several displaced women of Russian origin now working on farms while awaiting repatriation. The fiances of these women, also Russian DP's, were forced by the Poles to stand by. Identification of Polish soldiers by the Russian women in the presence of the CO of the Polish 3rd Battalion did not produce any action, even by the Polish Gendarmerie. Czech authorities do not have sufficient forces in this area to protect civilians against outrages such as this one. If there are any more such incidents, Czech officials may have to request Americans billeted nearby to intervene, as the occupation force in charge of the area.

13. Serious supply problems in this area could be alleviated if the scores of trucks now in Polish possession could be turned over to the Czechs, who claim to be the rightful owners of these vehicles left by the retreating Germans on Czech soil and not taken into possession by the American Army as war booty. (When the Poles came into Western Bohemia in April all they had was one private passenger car).

14. Gasoline, even for essential use such as ambulances, etc, is not available to the Czechs, and yet the Poles seem to have enough of it to drive private cars on long pleasure trips. Questioning of Poles about the source of gas indicates that they get it from the American Army.

15. Resume: The continued presence of the Armed Polish Brigade on Czechoslovakian soil without the permission of the Czech Government, which does not recognize the London Government to which the Brigade claims allegiance, and the anti-Russian sentiment of this Brigade create a very serious international problem. The Czechs could solve it immediately according to their own law, but are prevented from doing so because the American occupation troops who are allegedly protecting the Poles. The situation would not be so acute if the Poles would behave as the Americans do, but under present conditions they will have to be removed in order to

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avoid an unnecessary conflict with friendly Russia.

In view of this situation the Czechs suggest three possible means of getting rid of the Poles:

a. Removal of the whole Brigade to Northern France where the rest of the Polish troops are concentrated; or

b. Removal to Germany where the Brigade can be put under strict American (British) military control, (only about 20 Kilometers away); or

c. Since the Government to whom they claim allegiance does not exist any more (London Government), the Polish Brigade should be completely disarmed and put into a Displaced Persons Camp under American (British) control where they could await further decision as to their fate.

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